

Message Text

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PAGE 01 TEL AV 06886 311143Z

11

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 NSAE-00 NSCE-00 SSO-00

USIE-00 INRE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSC-05 PA-02

PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 IO-10 SAM-01 EB-07 /070 W

----- 079228

O R 311043Z OCT 75

FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8775

INFO AMEMBASSY CAIRO IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

UNCLAS TEL AVIV 6886

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, IS, EG

SUBJECT: ISRAELI PRESS REPORTS SCHEDULED PASSAGE OF ISRAEL-
BOUND CARGO THROUGH SUEZ CANAL OCTOBER 31

1. JERUSALEM POST OCT 31 CARRIES FRONT-PAGE STORY BY MIDDLE
EAST AFFAIRS WRITER SAFADI UNDER HEADLINE QUOTE ISRAELI
CARGO GOING THROUGH CANAL TODAY. UNQUOTE. FOLLOWING ARE
RELEVANT EXCERPTS OF ARTICLE.

2. BEGIN TEXT.

THE FIRST ISRAELI-BOUND CARGO TO BE ALLOWED THROUGH THE
SUEZ CANAL IN OVER TWO DECADES WAS SLATED TO PASS THROUGH
THE WATERWAY THIS MORNING.

THE SUEZ CANAL AUTHORITY SAID THAT THE GREEK VESSEL
OLYMPUS WAS DUE TO SAIL FROM PORT SAID IN A SOUTHBOUND
CONVOY AT 7 A.M. WITH A CONSIGNMENT OF 8,000 TONS OF CEMENT.
THE VESSEL WILL ARRIVE IN EILAT TOMORROW.

A SPOKESMAN FOR THE TRANSPORT MINISTRY IN JERUSALEM
YESTERDAY DID NOT DISCLOSE DETAILS BUT CONFIRMED
QUOTE REPORTS REGARDING THE EXPECTED PASSAGE OF THE
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VESSEL CARRYING AN ISRAELI CARGO UNQUOTE...

THE EYPTIAN AUTHORITIES HAVE BARRED NEWSMEN AND PHOTOGRAPHERS FROM APPROACHING THE OLYMPUS, ALLEGEDLY FOR SECURITY REASONS. THEY WERE BELIEVED TO HAVE IMPOSED THE BAN IN ORDER TO AVOID PUBLICITY IN FACE OF ARAB CRITICISM AGAINST THE SINAI ACCORD.

IN PLAYING DOWN THE EVENT, A SPOKESMAN FOR THE CANAL AUTHORITY WAS YESTERDAY QUOTED AS SAYING THAT EGYPT REGARDED THE ISRAELI-BOUND VESSEL AS JUST ANOTHER BOAT PAYING THE TOLL. THE SPOKESMAN DECLINED TO SAY WHETHER MORE ISRAELI CARGOES WOULD GO THROUGH, BUT HE NOTED THAT A NORTHBOUND VESSEL WITH GOODS FOR ISRAEL HAD CHANGED ITS PLANS RECENTLY.

THE OLYMPUS WAS EXPECTED TO BE EXAMINED BY TWO EGYPTIAN TEAMS, ONE REPRESENTING THE CUSTOMS TO ASSESS THE TOLL AND ANOTHER DELEGATED BY THE GOVERNMENT TO CONFIRM THAT THE CARGO IS QUOTE NON-STRATEGIC UNQUOTE. THE SECOND TEAM WAS LIKELY TO BE ACCOMPANIED BY AN OFFICER REPRESENTING THE ANTI-ISRAEL ARAB BOYCOTT BUREAU, ACCORDING TO CAIRO REPORTS...END TEXT.

3. HEBREW NEWSPAPERS CARRY SUBSTANTIALLY SAME STORY, WITH SEVERAL MAKING IT THEIR LEAD.
TOON

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